

Message Text

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ORIGIN HA-05

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DRAFTED BY HA/ORM;GLWARREN,JR./CV
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TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 200012

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: EXPANSION OF UNHCR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REF: GENEVA 11516

1. THE DEPARTMENT GENERALLY SHARES THE VIEWS OF U.S. MISSION GENEVA ON THE EXPANSION OF THE UNHCR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AS EXPRESSED IN REFTEL. OUR PREFERENCE CONTINUES TO BE TO HOLD THE NUMBER OF NEW MEMBERS TO FIVE, BUT WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE ELECTION OF THE FULL, NEWLY AUTHORIZED NINE MEMBERS IS A MORE LIKELY PROSPECT. WE SUSPECT THAT INTERESTED CANDIDATE GOVERNMENTS WILL START TO EMERGE AS WE APPROACH THE UNGA IN THE FALL, AND WE CAN LOOK AT EACH ONE AS THAT HAPPENS.

2. INSOFAR AS CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP IS CONCERNED, IT
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WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO REACH AGREEMENT ON SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS. HOWEVER, AS A GENERAL PROPOSITION, NO NEW MEMBERS SHOULD BE ELECTED WITHOUT SOME SENSIBLE RECORD OF INTEREST IN THE REFUGEE PROBLEM OR A DEMONSTRATED CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE AT A REASONABLE PROPORTIONATE LEVEL. SIGNATORIES TO THE 1951 CONVENTION AND THE 1967 PROTOCOL SHOULD, IN OUR VIEW, BE GIVEN DUE RECOGNITION. IN THIS

REGARD, HOWEVER, THE USG WAS SLOW IN BECOMING A SIGNATORY

TO THE PROTOCOL AND WE ARE NOT IN A STRONG POSITION TO
MAKE THIS A CONDITION OF EXECOM MEMBERSHIP.

3. QUITE NATURALLY WE ARE SEEKING MORE DONORS AND LARGER
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EXISTING DONERS. JAPAN, SAUDI ARABIA
AND IRAN OFFER SOME POSSIBILITY AND IT WOULD BE INTERESTING
TO KNOW WHETHER OR NOT MEMBERSHIP ON THE UNHCR WOULD AROUSE
SUFFICIENT INTEREST TO GENERATE NEW SOURCES OF INCOME.
THE USG COULD ALWAYS SUPPORT THE MEMBERSHIP OF NEW ZEALAND,
A REFUGEE RECEIVING COUNTRY, AND FINLAND A RESPONSIBLE
CONTRIBUTOR. WHAT WE WOULD NOT WANT TO SEE IS AN EXECOM
DIVIDED INTO GEOGRAPHICAL BLOCS OR POLITICAL GROUPING.
MOREOVER, REFUGEE PRODUCTNG COUNTRIES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
AS UNLIKELY CANDIDATES.

4. IN ANY EVENT, FOR THE MOMENT THE USG DOES NOT HAVE
IN MIND PROMOTING ANY PARTICULAR GOVERNMENT TO FILL THE
VACANCIES. MEANWHILE THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE INTERESTED
IN THE VIEWS OF USUN AND IN ANY FURTHER INFORMATION U.S.
MISSION, GENEVA MAY PICK-UP IN FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ON THE
SUBJECT. CHRISTOPHER

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